

- **Building sentence trees**
- **Null pronouns**
- **SSS and syntax**
- **Double-*ga* sentences**

Background preparation:

- *Practice trees*

0. Today's plan

Topics for today's discussion:

- Checking in on tree structures
Applying the X-bar model to Japanese
- “Implied” subjects and objects
- Referent honorifics — SSS and syntax
- “Double-*ga*” sentences

1. Starting point: Tree structures

- Review: Tree structures for phrases, sentences
Handout - [Syntax: Basics of X-bar theory](#)
- Practice with **CPs**
 - C = complementizer
 - C takes IP as its complement
 - CP phrase is (often) the complement of a V
 - 'said that IP'
 - 'believed that IP'
 - etc.

1. Starting point: Tree structures

- 1 Ken-ga Aya-ga odot-ta to omo-u
Ken-NOM Aya-NOM dance-PST that think-NPST
- 2 Kodomo-ga kabin-ga oti-ta to saken-da
child-NOM vase-NOM fall-PST that call.out-PST
- 3 Kisyu-ga kaisyu-ga tubure-ru to kaita
reporter-NOM company-NOM collapse-NPST that write-PST
- 4 Tomodati-ga boku-ga yasasi-i to it-ta
friend-NOM I-NOM nice-NPST that say-PST
- 5 Gakusee-ga tomodati-ga kurasu-o sabot-ta to mitome-ta
student-NOM friend-NOM class-ACC skip-PST that admit-PST

1. Starting point: Tree structures

- Some useful terminology:
 - **Structural subject** = The NP that is in the subject **position** in the sentence tree
 - **Structural object** = The NP that is in the object **position** in the sentence tree
 - What positions are these?
- Now that we have a basic **model** of sentence structure, we can try to **apply** it to some interesting phenomena in Japanese
 - To what extent is the model **universal**?

2. “Implied” subjects and objects

- How do we draw syntax trees for these sentences?
What do these sentences mean?

Aya-ga ringo-o tabe-ta

Aya-NOM apple-ACC eat-PST

ringo-o tabe-ta

apple-ACC eat-PST

Aya-ga tabe-ta

Aya-NOM eat-PST

tabe-ta

eat-PST

2. “Implied” subjects and objects

- Compare these examples:

A: Did you eat that apple?

B: #Yeah, I ate.

= grammatical, but infelicitous (contextually odd)

C: Ano ringo-o tabe-ta?

that apple-ACC eat-PST

D: Un, tabe-ta.

yeah eat-PST

- Is D’s response appropriate?
What does it mean?

2. “Implied” subjects and objects

C: *Ano ringo-o tabe-ta?*

that apple-ACC eat-PST

D: *Un, tabe-ta.*

yeah eat-PST ‘Yeah, I ate it.’

- The semantic representation (meaning) of D’s reply includes a **reference** to the apple and a **reference** to the speaker (=D)
 - There must be **something in the structure** that is doing the referring!

2. “Implied” subjects and objects

- Proposal: Japanese has **null pronouns**
 - A null pronoun has no phonological content
 - But it is present in the syntactic structure
 - And it contributes meaning to the sentence
 - We can represent a null pronoun as *pro* (pronounced “pro” or “little pro”)
- Draw an X-bar tree for this sentence:
Tabeta.
eat-PST

3. “Double-ga” sentences

- How do we draw syntax trees for these sentences?
Do they all have the same structure?

Ken-ga *supeingo-ga* *dekiru.*

Ken-NOM Spanish-NOM be.capable-NPST

Ken-ni *supeingo-ga* *dekiru.*

Ken-DAT Spanish-NOM be.capable-NPST

both mean: ‘Ken can (speak) Spanish.’

Ken-ga *ringo-o* *tabe-ru.*

Ken-NOM apple-ACC eat-NPST ‘Ken eats apples.’

3. “Double-ga” sentences

- What kinds of sentences use this pattern?
 - Examples of double-ga predicates (Koizumi 2008: (16))
 - a. Transitive adjectives
kowa(-i) ‘afraid of’, *hosi(-i)* ‘want’, *suki(-da)* ‘like’, *kirai(-da)* ‘hate’,
hituyoo(-da) ‘need’, *tokui(-da)* ‘good at’, *heta(-da)* ‘bad at’, etc.
 - b. Stative transitive verbs
deki(-ru) ‘can do’, *waka(-ru)* ‘understand’, *ar(-u)* ‘have’, etc.
 - c. Complex stative predicates
 - i. Potential verbs (V-rare/e(-ru) ‘can V’)
tabe-rare(-ru) ‘can eat’, *nom-e(-ru)* ‘can drink’,
hanas-e(-ru) ‘can speak’, *tumur-e(-ru)* ‘can close’, etc.
 - ii. Desiderative adjectives (V-ta(-i) ‘want to V’)
tabe-ta(-i) ‘want to eat’, *nomi-ta(-i)* ‘want to drink’,
hanasi-ta(-i) ‘want to speak’, *tsumuri-ta(-i)* ‘want to close’, etc.
 - What **thematic role** do these predicates assign to the syntactic subject?

3. “Double-ga” sentences

- What are the **structural positions** here?

Ken-ga *supeingo-ga* *dekiru.*

Ken-NOM Spanish-NOM be.capable-NPST

Ken-ni *supeingo-ga* *dekiru.*

Ken-DAT Spanish-NOM be.capable-NPST

- Is *Ken-ga* / *Ken-ni* a structural subject?
- Is *supeingo-ga* a structural object?
- First: let's look at **honorifics** and syntax

4. Referent honorifics and syntax

- **Referent honorifics:** Honorific morphology indicating that a referent of some NP in a sentence is SSS
- Data set - Honorifics and syntactic structure
 - $o + V(+i) + ni\ nar-u$ • used when _____ is SSS
 - $o + V(+i) + s-u-ru$ • used when _____ is SSS
- These constructions provide:
 - Evidence that syntax tree structures matter
 - Evidence about structural positions in double-*ga* sentences

4. Referent honorifics and syntax

- Compare:

Watasi-ga sensei-no o-nimotu-o o-moti si-mas-u.
HP-luggage hold (carry)

Sensei-no o-nimotu-ga todoi-ta.
arrive

Sensei-no o-nimotu-ga o-todok-i-ni natta.

- How do **syntax tree structures** help us understand this difference?
 - Hint: Find the **heads** of the subject, object NPs

4. Referent honorifics and syntax

- Compare these examples with the next (Koizumi 2008)

Tigusa-sensei-ga *gakuseitai-o* *o-yobi-ni natta.*
Chigusa-prof.-NOM students-ACC called (SUB-HON)
'Prof. Chigusa called students.'

#Gakuseitai-ga *Tigusa-sensei-o* *o-yobi-ni natta.*
students-NOM Chigusa-prof.-ACC called (SUB-HON)
'Students called Prof. Chigusa.'

- What **structural position** must an SSS be in, in order to license the use of subject honorifics?

4. Referent honorifics and syntax

- Why are these examples interesting?
(Koizumi 2008)

Tigusa-sensei-ga *gakuseitai-ga* *o-suki-da.*
Chigusa-prof.-NOM students-NOM like (SUB-HON)
'Prof. Chigusa likes students.'

#Gakuseitai-ga *Tigusa-sensei-ga* *o-suki-da.*
students-NOM Chigusa-prof.-NOM like (SUB-HON)
'Students like Prof. Chigusa.' (# with this interpretation)

- What can we conclude about the **structural position** of the second *-ga* phrase here?

5. Some implications

- In Japanese...
 - Sentences are (largely) compatible with X' model
 - Null pronouns take part in syntactic structure
 - Honorific usage is sensitive to syntactic structure
 - Direct objects can be marked with *-ga* NOM
- Next time:
 - Is the free word order of Japanese evidence against the complex X' structure?